

Southwest Area
Engine Operators Committee
Meeting Notes:

This is the Seventh meeting of SWAEOC

Meeting was held at Goldfield Admin. Site on the Tonto NF. Meeting was called to order about 8:45 with the following representation from the zones.

Flagstaff Zone: Josh Goldstein, Travis Mabery, Alanna Thornly

Grand Canyon Zone: Absent

Central West Zone: KC Yowell, Lindsay Yount, Marci Jimson, Kathy Livingston, Joseph Ugalde

White Mountain Zone: Bill Morris, Aaron Salizar

Southeast Zone: Dennis Haygood

Taos Zone: Absent

Santa Fe Zone: Absent

Albuquerque Zone: Todd Lerke

Gila Zone: Absent

Lincoln Zone: Absent

SWEAOC Secretary Bill Morris presented Facilities / Introductions and read notes from the November meeting.

SWEAOC Chair Todd Lerke spoke on the committee history and our future. He also gave a State of the Committee summary:

- Drafted Charter, sent it to the Regional Office and got acceptance.
- Southwest Area Engine Academy set up and Implementation.

- Establish Regional Equipment Committee & address FLT on upgrade issues.
- Committee is addressing changes in 310 – 1 engine staffing & performance based on fire behavior.
- SWAEOC worked with R5 & R6 counterparts to make Regional Engine Academy a Level 2 requirement under 5109.17
- R5 & R6 want the requirement pushed to Level 1 by 2006. SWAEOC does not support this at this time due to the number of Captains, Engineers, & Assistants that will still be out of the loop at that time. There are still issues on grand fathering – some districts will and some won't.
- SWAEOC is in the process of solidifying alliances with other Engine Operator Committees in Regions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8. Jointly these groups are formulating the National Engine Working Group.
- For the first Regional Engine Academy, the RO spent \$11,000 per student to assist in covering costs.
- There were 22 engines of various types and 1 water tender at the Academy with a combined value of \$3.4 million dollars.

SWEAOC Vice Chair Dennis Haygood spoke on the Academy from a student's perspective, saying that there were a lot of late study sessions and stress. It's all worth it, and makes the experience that much more real. Other students present expressed a desire to have seen their final tests to know where they went wrong.

Todd Lerke brought up the idea of moving the SWEAOC meetings around to the various zones through the region and will be contacting the zone reps.

Alanna Thornly gave an update on the 401 / IFPM / Upgrade subcommittee;

- Coconino is currently going through the appeal process at the RO level. Beal Monday then sought out support from all levels of the forest since the appeal not only benefits his position but all the engine positions.
- A / S is working on its own program filling two vacant GS 8 Supervisory Engine positions.
- Alanna stressed working WITH HR classifiers and try not to upset them personally. She will also be writing a letter regarding upgrades and the current situation. This current subcommittee is to remain intact as this issue is far from over.

Dennis Haygood recently returned from a meeting in Missoula on the Fuel Storage and Transport issue. At this meeting various reps were able to draft a policy. Use of the military “Gerry” can, OSHA felt they should not be used or at least retro-fitted (\$60 per can) into a form of safety can. They are on a 10 year phase out. The plastic version is to be gone within 3 years after this policy is adopted. The issue on the sigg bottles was that Primus is not to be used since they will not withstand the internal pressure test. MSR siggs will pass the test and are therefore approved.

Forest Service needs to obtain an amendment from OSHA for use of “Gerry” can. The same goes with siggs and drip torches due to materials of trade issues. Mark III cans are exempt as well as dolmars.

Over 26 full drip torches in the back of a pick up, then the truck has to be placarded for hazmat. One key element of the draft policy is the hazardous cargo limit. This is 119 gallons or 440 pounds, once these thresholds are met then the transporting vehicle must be placarded for hazmat and the driver must have a hazmat endorsement and a CDL is required. Drip torches, 5 gallon cans and fusees all fall into these criteria.

Dennis then spoke on the progress of the Code 3 subcommittee, and presented a draft policy to the committee for review. The Code 2 (emergency lights only response) was removed. This new policy document is intended to be a guide for District FMO’s in developing their own district policy on Red Lights and Siren use. The Coronado NF has tied the use of Code 3 response to fires to Fire Behavior, ERC’s, time of year and location of the fire (urban interface) as well as other criteria.

Todd Lerke updated the group on the national plan of engine numbering and unit identifiers. Oregon currently uses a 4 digits identifier which includes agency and apparatus ICS type. Some other regions have adopted the R3 reflective striping plan. R6 is currently adopting a standardization of position titles and appropriate collar brass, identical to the 5130-92 interim directive from R3. The issue of position identifiers / collar brass was greatly discussed and seems that its place would primarily be for interagency assignments (FEMA etc.) With the broad scope of this topic, an additional subcommittee was formed to review it and related aspects. Within this topic is the apparatus numbering program, unit / position identifier issue, code 3 red lights & siren use, and apparatus striping to name a few.

Fleet Management is currently deciding what is written on our equipment once it is ordered (BC / DIV etc). We (SWEAOC / Fire) need to provide them with the direction that we would like this to go for the future.

For the end of the Thursday meeting there was time for general discussion on open topics. This was mostly taken up with the Engine Academy curriculum. Long story short, this is all tied to 5109.17 standards.

Friday morning SWEAOC identified the following issues and whether there was a need for a working group.

Academy Home – Letter from SWEAOC to be sent to RO identifying concerns and ideas.

National Engine Working Group – SWEAOC will remain closely involved with this.

Marketing – A working group was established to bring together avenues for SWEAOC and the other Regional Engine Groups as well as the National Group. Development of a website and linking / sharing information will be the primary goal. Also to explore presentation of our info to other communities such as Hotshots / Helitack / Fire Staff / Line Officers and Inter – Regional applications.

Identifiers – As stated a working group was established to address a plan and outline priorities.

401 / IFPM / Upgrades – This working group will remain intact and continue its work.

Code 3 – A final draft was presented to SWEAOC from the group and will be forwarded to the RO. This working group is basically done for now.

R 3 Fire Equipment Letter – Drafts have been sent back and forth among working group members. The final should be close; it will then be passed up the chain through SWEAOC to the Regional Equipment Committee and the RO.

Engine Inventory – There is a draft for Type 3 engines currently floating around we will check on Type 6's and make them available as they become final.

S – 211 Revision Letter – It was expressed by Engine Academy students that were in attendance that the hydraulics portion of 211 needs to become more focused. Reviewing the student workbooks during the meeting, it was determined that the self-study pace of the course will no longer be appropriate given the importance of the course material within the Engine Academy curriculum. It was felt that the course should become more of a structured / instructed course with an additional 8 hours added to the overall time frame of the class. This will give adequate time to cover course material. A letter from SWEAOC to NWCG with these concerns will be drafted and sent out.

R3 Engine Equipment Committee – March Meeting notes should have been available last week. Equipment Catalog is under final review. One set of Hot Shot Buggies are currently being built by Unicor, Helitack vehicles are being examined. The Type 6 Engine Working Group came up with the Model 54 program and has wide acceptance nationally. The Type 3 working group has dissolved due to an inability to agree on a specific concept for a Type 3 Engine. Todd Lerke expressed strong concern that we put our heads together and differences aside and bring back this working group. If we chose to do nothing with this, then someone will do it for us, without our input if need be.

SWEAOC Priorities for the spring meeting were as follows.

- Engine Academy Permanent Home – SWEAOC to draft a letter and send to RO with needs and concerns.
- Identifiers – This is temporarily tabled since many zones have not had their meeting yet. It will be presented to the zones and findings and concerns will be put together and sent on to SWEAOC for review. This will be revisited in the fall.
- Marketing – A working group was established on this and the 5 of them will be getting information together and developing a plan for fall presentation.

The Spring Meeting was adjourned at this point.

Note to ALL zone chairs, this meeting will become more mobile in the future and you will be contacted concerning the location of the fall meeting.